



**SOUTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

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A SUCCESSFUL LEGISLATIVE SESSION FOR VETERANS

PIERRE, S.D. – With one day remaining in the 2015 South Dakota Legislative Session (Veto Day), this session can be termed a success for South Dakota’s veterans.

The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (SDDVA) sought passage of three bills this year, senate bills 33, 34 and 35. Senate Bill 33 extends resident tuition eligibility to spouses and children of active duty personal and of qualifying veterans. As part of Gov. Daugaard’s red tape initiative, senate bills 34 and 35 repealed unnecessary, obsolete, and outdated statutes.

Although the Department only introduced three bills, the Legislature approved numerous bills to enhance the lives of South Dakota’s veterans. These bills:

- Expanded veterans preference in employment to school districts, the state, counties and municipalities;
- Revised the state definition of veteran to include members of the armed forces reserves and South Dakota National Guard;
- Amended requirements that vehicle owners must satisfy before applying for military plates; and
- Added a requirement that SDDVA hire veterans for field officer and veterans service officer positions.

“The commitment and support of South Dakota legislators was evidenced by the votes in which all these bills passed,” said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

“We thank all of those that brought forward legislation, those that testified and those that continue to support our mission to be the voice for South Dakota’s veterans,” said Zimmerman. We encourage all veterans to contact their county or tribal veterans service officer (<http://vetaffairs.sd.gov/veteransserviceofficers/locatevso>) to learn more about their benefits.

